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# THE HOLY TRINITY AND DAILY LIFE

# THE HOLY TRINITY AND DAILY LIFE

BY

W. C. E. NEWBOLT, M.A.

CANON AND CHANCELLOR OF ST PAUL'S CATHEDRAL

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# PREFACE

THE following Sermons were preached during an ordinary August month of residence in St Paul's.

They are published in this form in response to a suggestion that they might prove to be useful to a wider audience.

It should be noticed that they do not attempt to deal, except incidentally, with the theological aspect of the great Mystery of which they treat, but are rather designed to show the intimate bearing that faith has upon practice; and farther to insist that none can afford to neglect, in the interests of a supposed simplicity, the great truths about Himself which GOD has been pleased to reveal to us.

The endeavour throughout these Sermons has been to show that the great facts of our religion are no mere barren dogmas to exercise the brain of the theologian, but living truths which have a minute bearing on the common every-day life of the humblest Christian.

W. C. E. N.

3 AMEN COURT,
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## CONTENTS


| | PAGE |
|---|---|
| PREFACE | 5 |
| THE MESSAGE | 9 |
| 'THE FATHER OF LIGHTS' | 23 |
| JESUS CHRIST | 45 |
| THE HOLY GHOST | 61 |

# THE MESSAGE

'Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the FATHER, and of the SON, and of the HOLY GHOST: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.'—ST MATT. xxviii. 19, 20.

HERE is a message of mystery.—It deals with matters where the human mind can scarce attempt to reason—a message of power—all Heaven and its agencies are behind it—a message of responsible work.—Unto whom much is given, of him shall much be required. The Apostles, the disciples, the audience addressed, whoever they were, were not allowed to go home and dream of their privileges, to talk of scenes they had witnessed, and of men whom they had met, and crises once deemed important, but now ready to vanish away. To have met CHRIST, to have seen CHRIST, to have heard CHRIST, left the man responsible. Henceforth he becomes a living agent. It is his to speak, act, and even push his message. Whether they will hear or whether they will forbear, I cannot but speak

the things that I have seen and heard, 'Yea, woe is unto me if I preach not the Gospel.'[1]

I would fain make here a preliminary protest against selfishness, a selfishness to which we English people are especially prone. 'I keep myself to myself' may be a very sound sentiment, but not when people have missed their way and we are able to guide them; or are starving and we have the means to feed them; or are perishing and we are able to rescue them. Why are we English people so shy about our religion? Why do we resent it if a man asks about our soul almost as much as if he had asked us about our income? Why do we say to our children, 'My child, there are many paths and many religions in the world, do not let me prejudice your choice. If you like to worship GOD on Sunday you shall go to church; if not, you shall please yourself'? Experience of good and experience of evil are all closely locked up within a fast-bound reserve. We think it is modesty, we think it is reverence, we think it is a respect for human free-will. Is it possible that it is the selfishness which is careless of another's wealth, or at least dreads self-assertion, as even by an inverted hypocrisy, it pays a homage as from virtue to vice?

My brethren, note, I beseech you, that CHRIST has these two words for His disciples and friends. 'Go!' Away with apathy; be active;

[1] 1 Cor. ix. 16.

the world is calling you. 'Teach!' Unloose your selfish shyness. You have something to say, and you must say it.

## I

Now what is the message? This is not so obvious, nor so clear. What has the disciple to do? What has he to say? How is his message to be summarised? Our LORD answers all these questions in the words which I have just read to you, and as to which I ask your earnest attention. 'Go ye therefore,' so it runs (in the Revised Version), 'and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the Name of the FATHER and of the SON and of the HOLY GHOST: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you alway, even unto the consummation of the age.'

The nation, the world, the average man are walking in one state: they have to be lifted up into another.

It must often have occurred to some of you to be looking out at the stars, on some beautiful night, and you have watched them twinkling in their sparkling glory. And one who knows the secrets of astronomy has shown you something as to their laws, their nature, their courses or their fixedness; and a familiar sight has been lifted into a new region of scientific wonder. Or a botanist has shown you the marvellous structure of the simple flower you have so

often passed, and related it to laws of ordered magnitude. Or an archæologist or historian has peopled the familiar scenes with the pageant of history, and has lit up a new light of interest in the streets and lanes which before seemed but a monotonous and dreary waste. So GOD is all around us, and we know it not. He moves behind the beauty of the world, the bright colours of the flowers. The glory of sunrise and sunset, the incoming majesty of the sea, the grandeur of the storm, are but so many ordinary natural functions behind which is GOD. The approving voice within is GOD. The commanding or the condemning voice is, once more, the voice of GOD. The restlessness of the heart is an indication that GOD is passing by. The sorrow or the joy of the heart, are the light and shadow of GOD—and we know it not. This is the work, and this is the message, which those who have found must impart to those who have not. Let us listen to CHRIST'S own message to us, and try to understand it.

We must make disciples, He tells us, into the Name. We must make disciples into the Name by baptizing. First baptize—there must be first a death unto sin, before there is a new birth unto righteousness, and then we must put them into a new spiritual relationship with GOD; put them, as it were, into a holy precinct, in which they will meet and be blessed by GOD Who is a FATHER, Who is the Holy SON, Who is the Blessed SPIRIT; and then they must be led on by instruction into their full privileges:

being taught to observe all things which JESUS has commanded those whom He has taught, who have learned of Him. It is theirs to bring out of the treasure, which He has laid up with them, the wealth of teaching, the strength of Sacraments, the power of the Church. It is theirs to send mightily down the ages the strength of the Sacramental life, the abounding joy of the LORD, the revelation from on high, the clue to the mysteries of life, the new nature given by Baptism, the power which succeeds to the escape from sin, as making them capable of instruction, making them worthy to become disciples of The Name.

How much there is conveyed to us, evidently, in the Name of GOD! The Name stands in more than one passage of Holy Scripture for certain revelations which GOD has been pleased to make of Himself to us, certain discoveries which represent to us just as much as we are able to apprehend of the Divine Nature. And we must remember this: that when we speak of the Name of GOD we do not mean titles which, in our ignorance, we have given to a Supreme Being remote and unknown to us. The names of GOD have been given us by GOD Himself. They are titles which GOD has applied to Himself to show us Who and What He is.

Three times in history has the veil been lifted. To the patriarchs He revealed Himself as the Almighty—His Omnipotency was, as it were, the sum of their creed. There was no divided empire between good and evil.

God is the All-powerful One Who brooks no rival on the throne. This was a revelation. Next, coming down the course of history, He gave to Moses as a sacred deposit that Name, 'I Am,' which declares the nature of God[1]—underived, eternal existence; and then, as we have just heard, before His Ascension, our Blessed Lord, the Word of God, gave to His Church the threefold Name of God, in the Trinity in Unity, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, which is the final manifestation of God, which He has made to us in His Son.

See what points of extreme solemnity to us are these Names of God, whereby we are able to know that about Him, His nature and existence, which of ourselves we never could have learned. It is one thing to feel that man needs lifting up; it is another to know what it is to which we have to lift him—to know that the highest thing we can do for any man is to help him to know God, and Jesus Christ Whom He has sent.

We can never say it is an indifferent thing what a man believes, be it natural religion, revealed religion, or no religion at all. Dean Church has spoken of the loss it was to the ancient world, merely to guess at the forms whose shadows they saw reflected on the veil as yet undrawn by revelation. 'They looked,' he says, 'with unsteady and wavering vision; they saw, and they saw not; one impression came, and was chased away by

[1] Exod. vi. 3.

another; they seem like men striving after a great truth apparently within their reach, but really just beyond it. Serious questioners I do not doubt that many of them were, of what they saw, of their own selves, of what had been handed down to them from their fathers; seekers after GOD and of the invisible things of Him they may have been, but who will say that they were finders."[1]

No, it is just when human powers fail, where the clouds chase each other down the mountain side, and all further progress seems barred by the gloom, that to the godly there ariseth up light in the darkness. The hand of GOD lifts up the veil of mist, and shows us that there is an end to the path, which it seemed so hopeless to pursue. In the perplexity of speculation, in the bewilderment of the moral struggle, in the shower of blows which beat a man down in his struggle with what seems to be only blind chance, then the revelation of GOD in His irresistible might, in the tenderness of a FATHER, the power of a SAVIOUR, the strength of a Comforter, adds renewed vigour to the faltering steps. He can reverently bow his head, he can raise his eyes to Heaven, and as he murmurs 'GOD is where He was before,' pass on his way, as one who has seen a vision and is comforted by a knowledge which has given him strength.

[1] Dean Church, *The Gifts of Civilisation*, p. 314.

## II

Such is the message; and once more, who are the messengers whom CHRIST chooses to deliver it? Of course it is obvious that a matter of such extreme importance cannot be left entirely to the readiness and goodwill of the ordinary believer. There are, as CHRIST Himself appointed, certain accredited agents, who in all ages are commissioned by prayer and laying on of hands, who are 'put in trust with the Gospel.' We are familiar with an ordained clergy; we accept their ministrations and listen to their teaching up to a certain point; and yet how lightly do the people of GOD realize their duty to the clergy who are set over them in the LORD. Of course they do not know the long years of training which go before the ministry, much, it is true, indirect, in what is known as a liberal education, and also that which is direct, in preparing the soul to stand before GOD, to hear His message, and to impart it to the people.

The people are quick to criticize us, the clergy to notice our faults and shortcomings; but they should also feel that as Aaron and Hur held up Moses' hands when he was interceding for Israel in the conflict with Amalek, so there is a duty of support which the people owe to their clergy.[1] The question of money support becomes more and more a pressing one; for no one, apart from the desperate shifts

[1] Exod. xvii. 12.

of politics, can believe for a moment that you strengthen a ministry by impoverishing it, or speed the army of GOD by cutting off its supplies. Even St Paul in his time had to remind the Christians of their duties in this respect, and to impress upon men that they must not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn.[1]

But far beyond this, higher than this, we owe them respect and sympathy. 'We beseech you, brethren,' says St Paul, 'to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the LORD, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake.'[2]

The work of a conscientious minister of the Name is no easy one; the message he brings is not one to commend itself at once to those who love darkness rather than light, and resent the sudden glare and the disturbing flash.

The proclamation of the Fatherhood of GOD is not the pleasing message which some take it to be. Here is a young life fluttering like a butterfly through the bright day, gay, irresponsible, frivolous, with no conscious duties and no sense of vocation. He goes down streets eloquent with the names of the famous dead, now passing beneath their statues; unfired by enthusiasm; unmoved by the tradition of their victories, ready to die at the first nip of adversity, and throw up the fleeting phantasm which he calls life; and we clergy, if we are faithful, have

[1] 1 Tim. v. 18.

[2] 1 Thess. v. 12, 13.

to tell him of a FATHER Who made him to be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures; Who sent him into the world to do a work; Who gave him a tongue that he might deliver a message; Who strengthened him that he might accomplish a task. No wonder that the messenger of GOD seems to him but a prophet of evil, a Micaiah the son of Imlah, whom he hates because he does not prophesy good concerning him, but evil.[1]

Or here is a man imperfectly instructed, baptized, it may be confirmed, yet falling a victim to his vices and passions because he knows nothing of the strong, sustaining influence of the Catholic Church. The minister of the Name has to tell him how the chain of his sins may be broken off, how new life may be given him in the precious Food of the Altar. He must be told of prayer and of the Holy Scriptures; he must be warned in no uncertain tone that the way of salvation lies here; that it does matter most emphatically what he believes; that there is a broad way and a narrow way; that the Church is not an established luxury, but in view of life with its manifold temptations the way of salvation. Can we wonder if he calls his instructor a sacerdotalist, or mutters about moderation, or even asserts his views and magnifies his opinions? 'No man also having drunk old wine, straightway desireth new: for he saith The old is better.'[2]

[1] 1 Kings xxii. 8. [2] St Luke v. 39.

And the Church with its uncompromising message has to go to the world, to society with its lamentably low tone, to men and women who think that they have achieved wonders if they can fly as near to the flaring lamp of sin as possible without scorching their wings; and the ministers of the Name have to proclaim that the world, with its low maxims, its hollow pleasures and negative virtues, is deceived; that this lamp blazing in the shuttered room is not the true light: that behind the darkened window the yellow flare and the scenes of revelry and hollow mirth, the sun is shining and the glory of Heaven in all the splendour of true beauty is unfolding itself, fresh, sparkling, living, to the pure in heart who can see it. They must be told of the spiritual life, where kindliness is exchanged for love, pleasure for joy, contentment for peace, easiness for long suffering, good humour for gentleness, tenderness of heart for goodness, an easy confidence for faith, good taste for meekness, steadiness for temperance. No wonder the world asks for new creeds, or even a revived Paganism. The Church asks too much in this message of the revealed Name. The old Roman world was right. Christianity was an unsocial superstition!

## III

But you know as well as I do that you cannot leave the ministry of the Name to the clergy entirely. Certain duties are sprung upon you

when you least expect it, when you are required to bear witness to the truth or forfeit your self-respect for ever. This life of irresponsible frivolity is displayed, it may be, in one to whom you are bound in the indissoluble ties of Holy Matrimony, as wife. The tremendous task which requires all your bravery, and all your tact, is laid upon you to save your husband. It is your son whom you have neglected to help or warn, who is now following his father's ways. What are you to say? How are you to stop this mad rush into the far country, where the end, as you know, is nakedness, swine, husks and starvation? You know that you must tell him that life is not a game, that salvation without CHRIST is impossible, and that goodness without GOD'S grace is unattainable. Or you are placed in a certain position of authority. Your voice, your vote, will tell one way or the other, in the purity of public morals, or the maintenance of religious education. You will have to say that you cannot cut out Holy Baptism, Holy Communion, the practical knowledge of the Blessed TRINITY, as part of an undenominational residuum, or a negligible opinion for those who choose so to receive it. But you will have to proclaim your adhesion to the revelation which GOD has made in CHRIST of what He is, and of what man needs, and so yourself be a minister of the Name. And this ministry extends wider still. It is not too much to say that to everyone comes at some time or another his special opportunity, his own peculiar witness which he has to deliver, some-

one to whom he has to make known the saving power of the Name.

A great writer of fiction represents one of his characters as saying, while listening to the footsteps of men and women who are hurrying in from the storm, as they echo and re-echo round the court, 'I often listen to these footsteps and wonder if they are the footsteps of those who by and by are coming into our lives.'

Here is some Saul coming to you, and he has lost his way. Blinded and stunned, like some caged animal, he has dashed out his eyes leaping against the bars of circumstance. He is waiting for you to be an Ananias to him, and to bring him the way of salvation.[1] Here is some Onesimus, coming to you a truant and runaway servant—fraudulent it may be—who, perhaps, has waited on you at dinner some time or another, or who knows your name and general character. He is looking out for you to come to the big city, that he may find you out, and get you to restore him to honesty and usefulness.[2] Here is a St Mark who has made a mistake and cut himself off from the Apostolic fellowship. He is waiting for you to be a St Barnabas to him, and to temper justice with mercy.[3] It may be it is some Apollos, who has only learnt a portion of the truth, waiting for you to teach him the way of God more perfectly.[4] It may be some future Apostle who is looking on at

[1] Acts ix. 10. [2] Philemon 10. [3] Acts xv. [4] Acts xviii. 26.

your life's martyrdom, to whom your patience and devotion are to be a continuous protest and a compelling attraction.[1] 'Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the FATHER and of the SON and of the HOLY GHOST: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you.' Everyone is capable of receiving this great doctrine of the FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST. We know nothing of a doctrine of Mohammedanism as more suitable for imperfectly developed man. We know nothing of a more simple Deism as suitable for those who are to be brought up on a system of undenominational ethics.

We despair of none; we give up none. We cannot lower the doctrine, we will not disparage its mystery. The strong, vigorous creeds to brace, the full Sacramental life to feed, the highest spiritual excellence to be our ideal. We cannot teach more, we dare not teach less. 'All things whatsoever I commanded you.'

Does it after all come to this? Has GOD the FATHER made Himself known unto me? Do I know the sweetness and strength of the sacramental life, and the power of GOD unto salvation to those who believe? Do I know what the gifts of the HOLY SPIRIT really are? Have I any experience of the fruit of a good life? The Gospel is a gift too large for my own needs, great as they are. I shall be constrained by the awful

[1] Acts vii. 58.

presence of the FATHER, Who has given me a work to do, calling me into His vineyard. I shall be drawn by the mighty power of the sacrifice of the SON. I shall be strong in the abiding presence of the HOLY GHOST, Who dwelleth with me, and shall be in me. Yes, I know it is all true. I have felt it. I know He has sent me; He has nerved me and strengthened me. Controversy does not shake me, passion does not move me; life does not terrify me; that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you.

This is what GOD seeks in His messengers! men who are alive with the TRINITY message themselves; men who know that the message which GOD has to proclaim to us is a supernatural one – His Church a supernatural Church.

Never was there less cause to despair than now; and yet over and over again we are tempted to do so, in the growth of materialism, the giving away of foundations here and there, the failure of ideals, and the withering of hopes. But yet we can never despair if once we have learned our message, the doctrine of the Great Name, of GOD, Who at once is FATHER, SAVIOUR, SPIRIT, never ceasing in His activity, never wearying in His love, never exhausted in His strength.

Sometimes in the stillness of a Sunday in this city you can hear the bells from the different towers and steeples calling men to worship GOD. Or as you pass through the land you can see the towns and villages, each with their house of

God, stretching away like beacons from one end of it to another. Then you feel that God has not left Himself without witness; in each of those churches there is the solemn pleading before God of the Atoning Sacrifice, offered to the loving Father in the power of the Spirit. He watching over Israel, neither slumbers nor sleeps. 'God is in the midst of her, therefore shall she not be removed; God shall help her, and that right early.'[1]

Thou hast been, Thou art a refuge,[2]
When this day of surging thought,
Brings all sanctities to question,
And all hollow faiths to naught;
O, what doubts, what drear negations,
Straightway 'neath our feet are trod,
When we answer with our *Credo*
In a true and living God.

[1] Ps. xlvi. 5. [2] Dr Bright, *Hymns and other Poems.*

# 'THE FATHER OF LIGHTS.'

'Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with Whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning. Of His own will begat He us with the Word of Truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of His creatures.'—St James i. 17, 18.

## I

Again and again we say, each of us and all of us, 'I believe in God.' We learnt to say this in our Catechism when we were children: we say it each time we come to church. We say it, perhaps, in our private devotions. The Church is instructed to ask each one of us, as to this subject, before we die. 'Therefore,' says the priest in the Visitation of the Sick, 'I shall rehearse to you the Articles of our Faith, that you may know whether you do believe as a Christian man should or no.'

'I believe in God.' Now do we? To say

this, we remember, is not merely to say 'I believe there is a GOD.' The devils, St James tells us, believe that. They believe as much as that and tremble.[1] There are many people who believe loosely, in a great first cause, or a hazy Providence, as they call it, about which it is useless, and even dangerous, to speculate or to wish for any further knowledge.

But the Church believes, with the Bible in her hand, that the Christian can say, and must say much more than this, that he must accustom himself to declare 'I believe in GOD.' To believe in GOD is to have personal relations towards Him, to trust Him, to hope in Him, to love Him, fondly to reach out after Him wherever we may hope to find Him, diligently to collect, to listen to, to follow out all that the Church has told us about the revelation of GOD in CHRIST.

Some people in their eager inquiry as to the authorship and date of the Fourth Gospel seem to forget that it contains those priceless revelations of GOD, from the lips of CHRIST Himself, which whenever and however they were spoken, the Church has received to hold as some of the most precious treasures of the Word of GOD. It is a sorry thing to be so intent on the geological formation of a mountain as to lose all appreciation of its magnificence, and of its function and place. It is not left to us to feel out after GOD, if haply we may find Him.

[1] St James ii. 19.

To the least glimmer of the feet of GOD,
Grass on the mountain-tops, or the early note
Of wild birds in the hush before the day—
Wherever sweetly in the ends of earth
Are fragments of a peace that knows not man.

GOD has spoken, and His Church has spoken.

The Church, as early as the second century, began to use that mysterious word 'Trinity' in speaking of GOD.[1]

Fiercely and passionately all through the ages had been maintained GOD's revelation of Himself to the Jewish nation. GOD is One. But from the lips of CHRIST Himself, as recorded in the New Testament, the Church had learned 'that there were distinctions of some kind within the Godhead, so that FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST could be spoken of in some sense as Three, or a Trinity' Does this mean, then, that GOD sometimes assumes the attitude or character of a FATHER, or of a SON, or of a HOLY SPIRIT?

A Trinity—Three—Three what? The Church, having our LORD'S teaching in remembrance, where He speaks of the HOLY SPIRIT as a Person distinct from the FATHER and the SON, saying, you remember, 'He shall teach,' 'He shall guide,' 'He shall convict,'[2] could only answer the question, 'Three what?' by saying, 'Three Persons.'

Are there, then, three GODS? No. There

[1] See Bishop Gibson, xxxix. Art., vol. i. 104.
[2] St John xiv., xv., xvi.

arose the necessity for that further term substance, denoting essence or nature of the Godhead, of which all Three Persons partook. Three persons, one GOD, of one substance, or nature. Three in One, and One in Three. If anyone wishes for a fuller explanation of these titles he could not do better than study that magnificent declaration of faith called the Athanasian Creed, of which the Dean of Wells says, 'There the old mystery is stated in the plainest terms, involving the sharpest antitheses. Not a phrase that is used is new; each phrase has been tested in the long fight, and has been found needful to protect some portion of the truth. Almost every sentence is the tombstone of a buried error. All the subtle explanations are ruled out; the mystery remains mysterious —GOD is Three, and GOD is One; CHRIST is GOD, and CHRIST is Man.'[1]

But perhaps you will say, 'I am a plain man. I would fain leave these things to you clergy, or to wiser heads than mine, and content myself with a humble belief in a simple GOD, in a reverence for a Power wiser than myself, which is the common property of all mankind.'

But, dear friends, we cannot maintain for one moment, that what GOD has thought important for us to know should be deemed unimportant for us to believe. 'O righteous FATHER,' says our Blessed LORD, 'the world hath not known Thee: but I have known Thee, and these have

[1] Dr Robinson, *Some Thoughts on the Athanasian Creed.*

known that Thou hast sent Me. And I have declared unto them Thy Name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them.'[1]

My brother, if you are a plain man, you are also, I take it, a business man, or at least you have lived long enough in this world to know that it does make the greatest possible difference whether or not we know the exact truth as to the forces which we have at our disposal, the aim we have in view, the best way of surmounting obstacles and avoiding dangers. The navigator does not commit himself to the open sea with a general idea that he is fond of sailing and that his ship is a good one. He has studied the use of compass and chart; he knows what is to be said in the Bible of experience and the Creeds of navigation. Life is not the easy, haphazard thing which we take it to be. The shore is strewed with wrecks. There are contrary as well as favouring winds. Again and again a man will say that he is the sport of a malignant fortune, the play-thing of chance, only born to be deceived and tossed about; and there comes a time to everyone when he will need to turn with all his heart to what he knows, in order to correct that which he only ignorantly guesses or mistakenly fears.

'I should utterly have fainted; but that

[1] St John xvii. 25, 26.

I believe verily to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.[1]

And you will find that this revelation of the Holy TRINITY is no bare and dry dogma of abstract theology, but that it enters with a living power into the most intimate regions of this life, and how true it is that 'this is life eternal, that they might know Thee the only true GOD and JESUS CHRIST, Whom Thou hast sent.[2]

## II

And so I approach the majestic Creed of my Baptism, and I find that that which looked so stern and rugged afar off is smiling with sparkling streams of refreshing water, is clothed with trees whose leaves are for the healing of the nations, which bear fruit every month,[3] and which stands out as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land—and so I approach with interest and with hope that sublime formula, 'I believe in GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, maker of Heaven and earth,' and I ask quite simply, What does it mean?—not that I may intellectually credit it, but spiritually believe in it. What does it mean? It means just what it says: that GOD Who is the FATHER of our LORD JESUS CHRIST, the Eternal FATHER of all things, is also my FATHER; that in my darkest hours

[1] Ps. xxvii. 15. [2] St John xvii. 3.
[3] Rev. xxii. 2; Is. xxxii. 2.

of failure, my most gloomy hours of sorrow, my lurid hours of prodigal wandering, I may realise this: There is Someone to love me, Someone to care for me, Someone to rescue me. There is Someone Who has sent me into this world; henceforth I have a purpose, I have a duty; I have, in the fulness of the word, a vocation. Cardinal Newman has told us how when he was lying sick with fever in Sicily, this thought revived him: 'I shall not die this time; God has a work for me to do. My death will not be yet.' How many a man who, in the awful phrase is 'throwing himself away' has been stirred again into activity by finding that there is still something for him to do. He can fight his country's battles; or some generous friend is prepared to trust him and he finds out his own worth once more; and he is no mere derelict tossed to and fro on the waves of chance.

The belief in the Fatherhood of God, if rightly held, and believed in, will give us the self-confidence that we need, the sense of our value, and the honest pride of being a component part in the purpose of God.

The love of power, the love of our own way, a wrong sense of self-importance—as the Scripture calls it, 'the pride of life'—is as much part of the allurement which brought about the Fall as the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes.[1] The desire to be as God! we

[1] 1 St John ii. 16.

know it in its extreme development as ambition, 'the last infirmity of noble mind,' which builds up the monument erected to self, with the fragments of other men's lives, or at the price of national prosperity and universal confusion. We know it as conceit, the peculiar vice of the little-minded man, who, like Haman, in the Book of Esther, cannot rest while Mordecai refuses the incense of flattery, or even the recognition of his superiority.[1] But there is at the same time a right self-confidence. There are occasions when a man may receive without fear or sinful weakness the praise of men, or even the approbation of his own conscience. 'If he is doing his work well,' says Dean Church of the clergyman, 'he cannot well help feeling one of the greatest pleasures in life, the pleasure of good work for good work's sake, the pleasure of doing his work according to the aim and desire of his heart. He cannot help having the pleasure which a really great commander has in the risk and hard work of a well-conducted war, the pleasure which the artist, or the thinker, or the discoverer, has in those exercises of power and energy which, though full of toil, and perhaps mixed with disappointment, yet answer to the prospect of the soul.[2]

Yes, the joy of the workman in the work is

[1] Esther chap. iii.

[2] Dean Church, *Cathedral and University Sermons*, p. 208.

a real, a legitimate joy. As long as he remembers that he is working with GOD'S tools, with GOD'S material, with GOD'S constant help and inspiration, and that at the end he is but as a child who, when praised by his father for good work, must remember that the praise means only this: that it is work good for a child as done by a child, and has but a very faint reference to the standard of absolute good or bad. When we have done all, we are all unprofitable servants; we have done that which was our duty to do.'[1]

Side by side with a restless activity at the present time, must it not be said that there is much idleness? It cannot be right that a man or woman should spend their time and money and energies in the development of a game, however excellent it may be. To put what should be a recreation in the place of a life's work is surely an utter inversion of the truth of things. One has spoken of the impossibility of living on dishes which are entirely made up of sauces, and yet there are some people who live apparently for nothing else, who imitate Drake in playing bowls, but are not the least prepared to follow him in routing an armada. We remember how the Latin poet has spoken of 'a strenuous idleness'; the outlook is not much better in view of the calls, the causes, the need of workers, if we see how intellect and strength are being thrown away. There is a call for leaders in the State; men with power and

[1] St Luke xvii. 10.

ability stand on one side, and decline to be cumbered with the difficulties and toils of political warfare or social enterprise, and the State slips back, as it must slip back, when the necessary support is withheld.

I am almost ashamed to utter once more the cry which has now been so long echoing with despairing persistency from the mission-field: 'More men, more men!'

Can it be that young men to whom God has given health and strength, on whose education thousands of pounds have been spent, it may be; to whose better equipment fathers have sacrificed themselves—can it be that they have found their vocation in driving cattle in the backwoods, and in spending all their time merely in feeding themselves with an utterly selfish hope of ease and retirement, when they shall have to do nothing? God forbid that I should be understood to mean that the reclaiming of God's world from the curse of the Fall, or honest labour, are anything but good things. But there is many a Cincinnatus for whom God has other work to do than driving the plough; and there are other things to be thought of besides natural inclination in seeking our appointed post. It is as true of us as it was of the Apostles, in a secondary sense, 'Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you.'[1]

'We then, as workers together with Him,'[2]—this must be the appeal of those who come to

[1] St John xv. 16. [2] 2 Cor. vi. 1.

work as those who believe in GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, Maker of Heaven and Earth.

But the difficulty with many of us is not the difficulty now of choice; that is past and gone. We have chosen, it may be, the golden casket of the fable, only to find it full of earth and dead men's bones. We chose selfishly, and lived selfishly, and we have failed. How are we to retrace our steps? Is there a hard steward who stands at the gateway of GOD's vineyard, who says: 'We have no place for failures here, no old men need apply?' No, the work which was begun for self can be carried on for GOD. To do GOD's work we need not be a priest, or a teacher, or a missionary. GOD's work is to be done in building up, according to His pattern, the work which men do selfishly. Humble posts, filled by good men, the simple life lived in accordance with GOD's law, the broken life restored and made beautiful by penitence. In all these ways we can come back to the work of GOD. We can return to the home and find our niche next to the son who had never wandered, received with a tenderness which seems to single us out, with a humility on our part which knows the past, with a pride which thanks GOD for the present and hopes for the future; which says: 'I am not ashamed of what I have been, being what I am.' 'Behold, what manner of love the FATHER hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of GOD.'[1]

[1] 1 St John iii. 1.

## III

But there are some who say, 'This is all very well, but I cannot be GOD's child; the devil will not let me. The world's current is too strong, and the flesh, as represented by human nature, is too much for me.'

It is here that the Creed reminds us; that GOD, beside being our FATHER, is also 'ALMIGHTY,' and 'they always win who side with GOD.' St Christopher, the giant of the old legend, started life, we are told in the story, with a determination to serve only the strongest man. He served, says the legend, a mighty king. He even served the devil. But he found his Master at last in a little child—the Holy Child, JESUS. It is idle to profess that we believe GOD to be Almighty if we are cowering before the devil. The power of evil is immense; immense, we cannot doubt it; but GOD is stronger than the devil.

Alas! our inclination goes out to the tempting bait which the devil puts before us. The eye gloats on it; it is pleasant to behold. The flesh longs for it; it is good for food; the mind has discounted all fears and warnings. It is a tree to be desired to make one wise. GOD is tempting us at the same time for good, and we do not listen. We would be as the other nations; we scorn the privileges of the chosen people. Our soul loatheth this light bread of the Sacraments, and the mind has dethroned GOD. Anyone, we say, could have given us a

Bible which would appeal more to the intellect than the one we have got. Anyone could have made a better Church than we have got; we have made several already for ourselves. And what, after all, is sin but the blind stumbling of the soul towards perfection? I ask you, dear brethren, when we talk like this, has GOD a chance? 'Yet He also is wise,'[1] as Isaiah reminds us. He is Almighty. We languidly try, as we say, an eclectic system of expurgated means of grace, and we pronounce that GOD has failed. We condemn His precepts which we have never followed, and despise His promises which we have never accepted. And yet St Paul, in well-known words, suggests to us a temptation of the Spirit to good, in antagonism to the temptation of the flesh for evil. 'For the flesh,' he says, 'lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.'[2] And in this rivalry GOD is Almighty, leading us more and more by His light, into the perfect day. His service is perfect freedom; to know Him is to live; to serve Him is to reign.'[3] Joseph finds himself in the King's prison because he obeys GOD'S laws. But the prison opens upon the throne. Daniel's consistency lands him in the lion's den, but GOD shows him that even there He is mighty to save.

I plead, dear brethren, that if we believe GOD to be Almighty, we should at least give Him a

[1] Is. xxxi. 2. [2] Gal. v. 17.
[3] *Book of Common Prayer.*

chance. Who here to-day can say that he has made full proof of what GOD can do for him in this world's conflict? Is our heart in our religion? Can we trust GOD in the face of all the new cries which are being raised, the new methods which are being advocated? The test is sometimes made as between an upright believer and a loose-living Churchman. People say, 'Here is one, who without grace, without sacraments, and with no conscious belief in GOD, is living a far better life of righteousness and benevolence than many people who call themselves GOD'S children. Here, on the other hand, is one who professes that GOD is his FATHER, who has been baptized and confirmed and absolved, and who is a devout communicant, who is living a life scarred by shameful breaches and falls.' But evidently we are making an unfair comparison. We must compare the best of each. We must compare the consistent Churchman with the righteous unbeliever, and there will be no hesitation in declaring that here, too, GOD is Almighty. Here it will be seen that Christianity is not merely a higher morality, but that it is a life, marked by characteristics which no human effort has produced —love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance [1]—that being poor in spirit, the Christian is heir to the Kingdom of Heaven; that going on his way weeping he is bearing forth good seed and

[1] Galat. 22, 23.

receiving the comfort which GOD has for the mourner; that being meek he inherits the earth; that hungering and thirsting after righteousness he is being filled; that being merciful he obtains mercy; being pure in heart he sees GOD; that being persecuted for righteousness' sake he has become a king and priest unto GOD.[1]

No, most certainly, nothing has occurred yet in the moral, intellectual, social or religious world to dethrone GOD. You may still say without fear, 'I believe in GOD the FATHER Almighty.'

## IV

And we believe also that He is 'The Maker of Heaven and Earth.' We sometimes think it is harder to believe this, as dwellers in town, than if we were dwellers in the country. Yet after all, it is somewhat of a shallow sentiment of the poet—that 'GOD made the country and man made the town'; for we look hereafter for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is GOD.[2] GOD can be seen here in the City, after all, in His greatest handiwork—man; and His laws as affecting human life and conduct are as wonderful as those which affect the laws of the universe, the ordering of the

[1] St Matt. v. [2] Heb. xi. 10.

seasons, and the beauty of the world. It is for us to realize more and more that this is GOD'S world. It is hard sometimes not to fear the encroachments of materialism, as the world yields more and more of its wonderful secrets to the advancing research of man, did we not remember that He Who gave this world in charge, as it were, to man, to replenish and subdue it, cannot but be pleased and honoured by every fresh discovery of its riches and capacity.

GOD has given us all things richly to enjoy; only it should be a great duty laid upon us who thus recite the Creed to remember always GOD'S ownership.

Waste and the wilful plunging of hundreds into misery and want becomes something more than a clumsy effort to attain a desired end. Cruelty and injury to GOD'S creatures become something more than an offence against the requirements of a higher civilization. We are as those who find themselves the temporary tenants of a rich and well-furnished property, where all that is around us must be treated with the sacredness of a trust, as belonging to an absent LORD in Whose name we hold it.

What a sacredness this confers on all life, more especially on human life, on those who are the sons and daughters of GOD, part of His family, children of His bounty! Who can read without a burning sense of shame and fierce indignation the revolting details of what has well been called the White Slave Traffic?

Surely, we need another Livingstone to close an open sore of the world, nearer to us, and even more revolting, if possible, than the African slave traffic which he set to work to suppress. Our hearts turn to stone, our mind reels as we think of what man can thus make of man. We understand the fierceness of the wrath of ALMIGHTY GOD when He says that it were better for a man that a millstone were hanged about his neck and drowned in the depth of the sea, than that he should thus offend one of GOD'S little ones.[1]

Think of it; that erring child, whom you injure or neglect to help, is GOD'S child. That life, so exquisitely planned, is the life of one made to know GOD, to love GOD, and to serve Him. What must be his condemnation who injures GOD'S handiwork, or makes a cruel gash in the beauty of His world! If we do no harm, what are we doing for the world's good? There is no place so humble, no post so simple, but that we may find an opportunity of leaving that place better than we found it. Will you be missed when you go? Are you recognised as GOD'S agent where you are? Think of what one man has been able to do, before now, in the history of the world. Think, if good men were half as earnest for good, as bad men are for evil, what we might effect. The devil calls for agents, and he receives instant answers to his call. GOD calls for workers, and how few re-

[1] St Matt. xviii. 6.

spond! how timid they are, how faint-hearted and faithless! When a young man or young woman comes up to this city they will find many who will help them on a downward course; how few they find to help them upwards!

It is indeed a wonderful thought that GOD has entrusted so much to men in the administration of His kingdom, to men who again and again fail Him, and discredit as agents the work which He gave them to do.

How often has it been true that the chief obstacle to the Gospel message has been the clergy, who by wilfulness, unfaithfulness, luxury, or practical unbelief, have caused men for their sakes to abhor the offering of the LORD![1]

How true it is that again and again the chief argument against Christianity has been the lives of professing Christians. At least we can go forward as men and women who carry their Creed, not in books, but in their lives, whose whole conversation turns on this: that they live, move, and have their being as in the sight of One Who loves them with an everlasting love, Whose arm protects them, Whose wisdom provides for them, and Whose loving-kindness and mercy will follow them unto the end.

'Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am GOD, and there is none else. I have sworn by Myself, the word is gone

[1] Sam. ii. 17.

out of My mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Surely, shall one say, In the Lord have I righteousness and strength: even to Him shall men come: and all that are incensed against Him shall be ashamed. In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.'[1]

[1] Is. xlv. 22-25.

# JESUS CHRIST

'When JESUS came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the SON of MAN am?' St Matt. xvi. 13.

'WHAT a glad world this looks like,' says a well-known writer, 'as one drives or rides along the valleys and over the hills. I have often thought so when in foreign countries I have come on something by the roadside . . . an image of the cross. It has stood perhaps by the clustering apple-blossom, or in the broad sunshine by the cornfield, or at a turning by the wood where a clear brook was gurgling below. And surely if there came a traveller to this world who knew nothing of the story of man's life upon it, this image of agony would seem to him strangely out of place in the midst of this joyous nature. He would not know that hidden behind the apple-blossom, or among the golden corn, or under the shrouding boughs of the wood there might be a human heart beating heavily with anguish. Such things are sometimes hidden away among the sunny fields, and behind the

blossoming orchards. No wonder man's religion has much sorrow in it, no wonder he needs a suffering GOD.'[1]

He who put there the cross so described said 'I believe in JESUS CHRIST. I believe not only in the Fatherhood of GOD, but I believe in the redemptive power of GOD. If I believe in GOD the FATHER ALMIGHTY, Maker of Heaven and Earth, I believe also in JESUS CHRIST His only SON our LORD.'

And why do we say this so often and so earnestly. It is because it forms the great Gospel message — 'good news,' remember, 'not good advice.' Without it we should be beaten down by life's perplexities and life's riddles. We should join the throng of the many who say, 'Who will show us any good?'[2] But still JESUS CHRIST asks us the question, 'Whom do men say that I the SON of MAN am? Whom say ye that I am?'

The Nicene Creed answers this question more fully for us in carefully chosen words. JESUS CHRIST is not merely the greatest of human teachers; He is 'the only-begotten SON of GOD, GOD of GOD, Light of Light, Very GOD of Very GOD.' He is not merely a benevolent man who was fond of little children and kind to animals, but 'for us men and for our salvation came down from Heaven and was Incarnate by the HOLY GHOST of the Virgin Mary, and was made man.' So that unlike us He has two natures—a human

[1] George Eliot. [2] Ps. iv. 6.

nature and a Divine nature. But the Person Whom we thus speak of is GOD, always GOD. GOD was born into the world, GOD suffered on the Cross (not the GODHEAD), God spake parables and worked miracles.

'He possessed,' it has been said, 'two spheres of being, a higher and a lower, the two being ultimately related to and adapted to each other, so that the lower is that through which the higher acts and manifests itself in the finite world.' So our LORD translated His Divine knowledge, so to speak, into human form in so far as it could be thus expressed. So He was the perfect Infant, the perfect Boy, the perfect Man, 'giving to each stage of His growth that measure of human knowledge and wisdom which was appropriate to it.'

It is well that we should grasp these great facts of the Creed at the very outset, for they are not so many barren dogmas spun by the subtlety of the human intellect, but truths necessary for the efficacy of that salvation which we need, which we expect JESUS CHRIST still to work in us, with a confidence which, we know, will not be misplaced coming from this knowledge of and belief in Him.

## I

First of all we need Him as our SAVIOUR. This is His office. 'Thou shalt call His Name Jesus: for He shall save His people from their

sins.'[1] 'The SON of MAN is come to save that which was lost.'[2] This is the Divine purpose, this is the Royal Proclamation; this is what we profess to believe in. But while the words of the Creed remain, and the profession of belief in the Creed is still made: by a process of sinister omen which seems to be gaining ground, the practical affairs of life are governed on other principles and directed by other methods.

Progress, not salvation, is the watchword of the day, progress in that which is inherently self-sufficient and strong, not salvation for that which is intrinsically weak and stamped with the failure of the Fall. There is no such thing as sin, we are gently reminded. If there has been, if there is, a fall, it is a fall upwards. We are steadily progressing as a race by a development of human powers. We are grateful for the example of a good man; we do not need the supposed help of a supernatural GOD. We do not need a SAVIOUR, for we have nothing which needs salvation.

Christianity, it need hardly be said, can have no quarrel with progress. 'The earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of GOD.'[3] But Christianity maintains that this progress to be real must be a protected progress. Human nature is like some delicate machine which has to push its way through opposing obstacles hard and disabling. It

[1] St Matt. i. 21. [2] St Matt. xviii. 11.
[3] Rom. viii. 19.

reminds us of the machinery used to bore a tunnel through the solid rock of the Alpine chain where the boring instruments, driven by a vast mechanical power, need cooling, sharpening, replenishing if they are not to be shattered by the very progress which they are ceaselessly making. Guards, machinery for the cooling jets of water, protection, repairs, all diminish from the rate of progress, but progress is not possible without them, only spurts of work followed and retarded by disaster.

Have we not examples to hand in our modern life that progress without God's protection will not bear the strain put upon it? Ever since the year 1870 the promise has been held out to us that everything is possible to an educated nation. Some, indeed, were heard feebly to remonstrate that we must be quite sure when we speak of education that we have got hold of the right thing, that education is the training of the whole man, body, soul, and spirit. Then we were told that knowledge was everything. Our children must know; they must be instructed so as to hold their place in the world competition and to fill a due position in the world's markets. Religion must be carefully relegated to its proper place, for it would be a hindrance rather than a help. First, it must be shut off like an infectious disease by a conscience clause, and confined to an area of time which it must never pass. Then it must be made more and more optional for such stupid ones as might require it, it must be emptied of all dogmatic assertion and reduced

to an exhibition of feeble philanthropy and morality, deprived of all sanction. Best of all, it must be relegated to Sunday for those who like it, so that progress might sustain no hurt and every minute be profitably employed in the eager search for learning.

What has been the result? Is any human being satisfied with our national education as it stands? Has it attained even that end which it put before itself? Is a child crammed with undigested learning educated in any real sense of the word? And there are not wanting those who say that the result has been to bring about a general incompetency for those posts in the world which, while seeming to be unattractive, are valuable in the general machinery of life.

But looking deeper than this at the state of the nation, is not Christianity abundantly justified when it says that we cannot progress in this world without being protected from its subtle dangers? Is not Christianity justified when it says we need a SAVIOUR? I do not say now, what of course is an essential part of the Faith that we need a SAVIOUR in all the mystery of the Atonement, but practically daily and hourly we need a SAVIOUR and our children need a SAVIOUR. What is the Gospel, what is the Church as coming from the Gospel, but one vast protective scheme? The child needs protecting at the very outset from the mysterious warp which is obvious to any fair mind in contemplating human nature. Any living organism can

do one of three things: it can either stay as it is, get better, or get worse. It is a common place with all who educate, that human nature left to itself deteriorates.

We must be protected, the child must be protected, against the overwhelming force of evil pressing against it. 'The master of those who know,'[1] said years ago, 'It is a work to be good.' Everyone who is striving for the mastery is conscious that he is as one who is rowing against a strong stream which carries him back on the slightest relaxation of his efforts. Supernatural strength is needed against a mysterious power which we all are conscious of, towards which we have a strange affinity and in whose grip we are sometimes powerless. The SAVIOUR of mankind has developed the sacramental system further. Are our children to know nothing of such things as Confirmation, an ordained ministry, Holy Communion, and the like? Is there to be no provision for the wounded in life's battle? Is he who has once failed to fail always? Is Samson blinded and dishonoured for ever to remain in the prison-house of the Philistines? An elaborate penitential system, a system of restoration, is part of the provision of the Church rendered necessary by the very stress and heat of the battle. And in our wisdom we rule all these things out as denominational extravagances, and shout aloud the parrot cry of 'Progress,' which, we need to be

[1] See Dante's *Inferno*, iv. 130.

reminded, is sometimes a progress downwards.

No, of a certainty, we need a SAVIOUR. The more progressive we are, the more we need a Saviour. Do not let our young people think that when they turn their backs on London and seek a new life in the colonies—in Canada, or Australia, or New Zealand—that they are going to leave their temptations behind when they book their passage. There may rise up, there will rise up, if they are not careful, if they forget GOD, in the unpeopled solitude of the farm, the spectre of a gross materialism. It is one of the haunting visions which come to those who are responsible for the spiritual welfare of our countrymen — the prosperous man who has deteriorated, who has parted with one precious endowment after another until he has become a coarse, soulless, selfish sensualist without GOD in the world, himself almost devoid of that image and likeness wherein he was made. But we need not go abroad. Is the image of a progressive materialism at home a cheery one, the image of the man who has progressed, who is on the way to gain the whole world at the price of his own soul? A calculated selfishness, a disregard of the refinements of life, of the terms of honourable warfare, a deliberate adoption of the detestable creed that we may do evil that good may come, a little evil to secure a supposed greater good—here is another development of one who worships progress, ignores sin, despises a SAVIOUR, and is his own condemna-

tion, proclaiming his own failure, saying in the utter breakdown of his own ideals with Julian the Apostate, 'O Galilean, thou hast conquered.'

## II

'I believe in JESUS CHRIST.' I believe in Him, not merely as the SAVIOUR in all the powers of His great office, but I believe in Him also as a perfect examplar, a Divine Person. He is to me what He Himself claimed to be, the SON of MAN, the great realisation of the most perfect work of GOD in His last and best creation — man. When JESUS CHRIST, the eternal GOD, took upon Himself a human nature, He, the eternal GOD, was made the perfect Man.

I know that the contemplation of perfection may have a deterrent as well as an inspiring effect on a humble disciple. A child with a desire to study art and become an artist is not placed at once to try to make a copy of a masterpiece of Italian art. He has to learn patiently the elements of the art he wishes to follow. So with CHRIST: His perfection may seem to be deterrent, no one has ever been successful in detecting a blemish in that

perfect character; yet He calls upon us to follow Him, to be perfect as He is perfect, to take up the Cross and bear it after Him. And He appeals, no doubt, to some by this characteristic, to others by that. But His official title which we have just been considering may also yield to us a salient point of imitation. To be a SAVIOUR in the world He made, the world He loved, was the work of His unceasing ministry of goodness. Surely as saviours we shall best imitate Him, as saviours we shall best follow Him, as saviours we shall find ourselves near to Him on a cross which is the necessary instrument for those who set out with the purpose of salvation in their hearts.

To be a saviour as He was a SAVIOUR, needs as we see at once, the outfit of a perfect nature. No one could really say to Him, 'Physician, heal Thyself.'[1] No one could say to Him, 'You are inviting me to do things which You Yourself have found to be unattainable.' He reached out after men submerged and struggling from the vantage-ground of a perfect nature; and therefore if like Him we are to be saviours, it must begin here. We must save ourselves by those helps which He puts at our disposal—working out our own salvation.

Is it not true that many of us are as those who bivouac in a ruin? We are not masters

[1] St Luke iv. 23.

of ourselves, owners of our whole lives. The spirit is like the remains of the domestic chapel where men used to worship God but is now dismantled and overgrown with weeds. The soul in all its manifold ramifications of intellect, imagination, memory, and the like, is a sad and disordered place, where strangers enter unbidden, and confusion and anarchy reign supreme. The body, that splendid friend of man, that glorious field of sensation, is deformed and uncontrolled—like a city without gates and bars. Is there not much that we want to save in our own person if we wish to reflect the image of the Saviour?

We cannot acquiesce in large parts of our composite nature being filched from us. Even those very qualities which frighten us, those wayward, crooked tempers, those evil desires, have much to do for us; the stream of passion, which is now rushing down uncontrolled, could be harnessed, and give us light and motive-power. Those weak points could be our strong points. Shall we not imitate Him in this, in saving by His grace, and by using His own gifts—that composite being, which we call self, so that we may offer our whole being, body, soul, and spirit, a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God?

And like Him we should be a saviour to all who come within our reach. 'Of them which Thou gavest Me have I lost none.'[1] Such was

[1] St John xviii. 9.

His great assertion before He completed His ministry. How many whom God gives us, those in the family, our friends, our companions, we just let slip by some act of selfishness, by neglect of the right protest in the right way, the kind word spoken, the strong act done! If we knew how many in the secret of God's good providence depend on us, we should be less selfish and arbitrary. Lot, in not influencing his family, is destroying the city, which the righteous family might have saved.[1] St Paul, cleaving steadfastly unto God and living in the charmed circle of things spiritual, is the saviour of all them that sailed with him at the time of shipwreck.[2] It made a great difference to the marriage company at Cana that Jesus was an invited guest and present at the feast.[3] It was the complaint of Martha and Mary that the absence of Jesus from their home was the cause of the fatal termination of the illness of Lazarus.[4] When He was present at the supper, it was then that the poor sinner found relief in her act of penitence for the heavy load of her sin-stricken life.[5] We need not flatter ourselves that all feasts are missionary opportunities, or all visits full of occasions for displaying the power of God. But it is wonderful what opportunities come to him who is on the look out to use them. To be a saviour in society is one of the most difficult tasks that a man can

[1] Gen. xix. [2] Acts xxvii. [3] St John ii. 2.
[4] St John xi. 21, 32. [5] St Luke vii. 37, 38.

undertake, still it can be done. Still it can be shown that there is a power higher than the tyranny of fashion, and that such things as eating and drinking, merriment and festivity, can be used to the glory of God. The hermits made a protest, but it was not altogether a successful one. There are not wanting testimonies that when a man has fled from the world he cannot flee from himself. The Puritan Movement of the seventeenth century was followed by the reactionary license of the Restoration. The salt cannot be taken from that which it is set to preserve without corruption following as a natural result.

It is an evil day for a nation when those who should be leaders retire in disgust before accumulated evils and withdraw from society their example and their protest. The reformer is distinguished from the saviour chiefly in this: that the one thinks that the evils of the moment, the corruption of society, are only to be cured by a wholesale breaking up, and a drastic reconstruction, attended by a pitiable waste. The Saviour, on the other hand, finds a Matthew among the publicans, a Paul among the fanatics, a Francis among the thoughtless rich, an Augustine among the ranks of the dissolute. Again and again He refuses to range Himself on this side or that, or to identify Utopia with a political party.

He who follows his Saviour will be dis-

tinguished all along his course by a stream of salvation. He will be for ever gathering recruits for the army of the Cross out of strange and unexpected quarters.

In his penitentiaries he will be rearing Magdalenes: in his quiet homes he will be finding out 'the other Mary,'[1] the wife of a good man, the mother of noble sons. Even despised Nazareth will open up, and out of the place of which it was said, 'Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?'[2] will proceed One Whom all generations will call blessed.

Many great generals have been famed for those they destroyed, many reformers for the break up of great institutions. But the humble follower of JESUS will seek for honour in what he has saved, rescued, purified. Himself a ransomed being, appealing to those who are cast down and held in bondage by the comfort wherewith he himself is comforted of GOD.[3]

## III

But 'I believe in JESUS CHRIST' means even more than this: it means more than belief in

[1] St Matt. xxix. [2] St John i. 46.
[3] 2 Cor. i. 4.

the official SAVIOUR and the belief in the great Examplar of the perfect life. It means the belief in One Who has offered to be our Friend, Who, more than this, has promised to unite Himself with us in the most intimate sacramental union, so that by the system of the Sacraments which He ordained there may be, as it were, an extension of the Incarnation.

Only one, the blessed among women, had the unique privilege of the intimate union with Him which is implied in the mystery of motherhood. But to all who faithfully and with repentance and love approach Him, He has offered a complete and powerful union in His Sacrament. So our Prayer Book reminds us, if 'with a true penitent heart and lively faith we receive that Holy Sacrament,' 'we spiritually eat the flesh of CHRIST, and drink His blood: then we dwell in CHRIST, and CHRIST in us: we are one with CHRIST, and CHRIST with us.'[1]

We remember the sense of thankfulness here in England when the news was received that Havelock with a little band had thrown himself into the besieged Residency of Lucknow to relieve it. Here we are besieged and pressed, and CHRIST offers to throw Himself into the very citadel of our heart which is threatened by the enemy. Henceforth He will help us in the thoughts of our heart: His words will sound from our lips; His guiding hand will shape and

[1] Prayer Book, Holy Communion.

direct our actions. Like some pilot in a stormy sea, He boards the vessel tossing on the waves, He grasps the rudder, and steers the ship with His own hands into the haven where it would be. He who believes in CHRIST must never rest until his belief has placed him in this vital union, until we can say not only, 'JESUS, my SAVIOUR,' or 'JESUS, my Master,' but 'JESUS, my Friend.' 'LORD, Thou knowest all things; Thou knowest that I love Thee.'[1]

Do you ask for evidence of these things? If so, where will you seek it? Will you read some book of evidence which seeks to establish the supremacy of our LORD? Will you study the Gospels and for yourself seek to find the claims of CHRIST and the authority on which those claims rest? There is a better way than this. If the claims that CHRIST makes are true, traces of them must be discoverable in the lives and experience of those who have committed themselves to Him. Ask therefore those who have taken Him at His word. Read such books as *The Confessions of St Augustine*, *The Imitation of Christ*, and many others; and the writers will tell you, it is all true; they have taken CHRIST at His Word, and He has fulfilled it. They have trusted Him, and He has not deceived them.

Even more than this, try Him yourself, prove Him yourself, do His will, and you will be able

[1] St John xxi.

to say: 'Now we believe, not because of thy saying: for we have heard Him ourselves, and know that this is indeed the CHRIST, the SAVIOUR of the world.'[1]

[1] St John iv. 42.

# THE HOLY GHOST

'And it came to pass, that while, Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, he said unto them, Have ye received the HOLY GHOST since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any HOLY GHOST.'—ACTS xix. 12.

## I

SUCH, I fear, is the attitude of many Christian men and women at the present day. If they have heard of the HOLY GHOST, if they profess to believe in Him, to all practical purposes He has no part or lot in their life of Faith. To many He is but the spirit of GOD, in the same way as we conceive of our spirit as part of our composite being. To others He is but a theological abstraction which has no influence on life, no definite bearing on conduct. 'At least,' people say, 'if we do justly and love

mercy and walk humbly with our GOD,' we need not trouble our heads about conformity with a barren orthodoxy. And yet, as I have already pointed out, if GOD has thought well to reveal these things, it cannot be consistent with reverence or even with prudence on our part, for us to ignore them.

Our Blessed LORD, in the great discourses[1] of the night before He suffered, took especial pains to emphasise that He was about to send another Comforter or Advocate like Himself, to stay with us for ever, Whose relations to the believer are described by three different prepositions: He will be *with* him, *by* him, and *in* him. He as the Spirit of truth was to teach and to recall, to glorify CHRIST, to receive of Him, and impart unto His disciples. His presence, so mighty and so richly endowed, made it even expedient for them that CHRIST should go away; and yet we must remember that GOD has not sent His SON as a Redeemer and His SPIRIT as a Sanctifier, but GOD in His unity acts as One, sanctifying men through the redemptive medium of His eternally begotten SON. And so the HOLY GHOST comes to us as the Spirit of JESUS[2] the Spirit of CHRIST from the FATHER through the SON.

Do not think this, dear brethren, a dry and abstract statement. Because men have forgotten it, they have plunged into all sorts of wild fanaticism. They have become too

[1] St John xiv, xv, xvi. [2] *See* Galat. iv. 6.

spiritual for GOD. They want no Word and no Sacraments; the Spirit is in their heart, and that is enough. All that CHRIST has said and done may be discarded by one who is in touch with the Spirit. The Sacraments, like the sacrifices of the Old Covenant are first misunderstood and then discarded as unnecessary and degrading to the spiritual man. CHRIST becomes a Divine example of a higher morality; a desperate effort is made to leave the CHRIST of the Epistles as He is called, and to go back to a supposed simpler CHRIST of the Gospels Who is merely the Pattern of a higher life, a democrat, a labour leader, a preacher of a simple life, a Socrates, a martyr knowing as much or as little as any other Jew of His day; emptied first of His majesty, then of His GODHEAD, then of His supernatural bearing on life, until He simply takes His place in the library of remarkable men, a hero among heroes.

And this, if you sift it to the bottom, you will find to result largely from accepting spiritual life and impulse as one thing, and the life and death of JESUS CHRIST as another. Whereas to a Christian spiritual influence is, so to speak, mediated through JESUS CHRIST—'When Thou hadst overcome the sharpness of death, Thou didst open the Kingdom of Heaven to all believers.'[1]

The way to holiness, the way of spiritual

[1] Te Deum.

power and truth lies, not through the example but through the Divine life and mediatorial death of JESUS CHRIST brought home to us by the Spirit; so that it is necessary for us to believe that the HOLY GHOST is a Person, not an influence; that He is a Person in the Unity of the Holy TRINITY, with the FATHER and the SON Very and Eternal GOD.

The Holy SPIRIT appears here and there indistinctly in the Old Testament. In the New Testament there are certain startling and emphatic declarations of His presence and operation, which we read now in the light of a systematised knowledge and by the aid of the Catholic creeds, which when they were first given must have been so many liftings up of the curtain which hangs between us and the blaze of truth; the shifting of the clouds between us and the brightness of the firmament. In the perplexity, for instance, which hung around the Incarnation Mary 'was found with Child of the HOLY GHOST,'[1] this perhaps being an echo of that angel's voice which reached St Joseph, 'That which is conceived in her is of the HOLY GHOST.'[2] The Blessed Virgin is told, as if her long lookings into the spiritual world would make it intelligible, 'The HOLY GHOST shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee.'[3] Both Elizabeth and Zacharias are

[1] St Matt. i. 18. [2] St Matt. i. 20.
[3] St Luke 1. 35.

described as 'Filled with the HOLY GHOST.'[1] Of Simeon it is said that 'the HOLY GHOST was upon him,'[2] and that it was revealed to him by the same HOLY GHOST that he should not see death until he had seen the LORD'S CHRIST.[3] There are several other instances which I need not mention of His being indicated, in the life of St John the Baptist, the commission of the Apostles, the temptation in the wilderness, the experiences of Nicodemus, and the like. And more especially in the terms of the great commission where the HOLY GHOST takes His place in the Blessed TRINITY.[4] You will remember, again, the mysterious and awful indication of the blasphemy against the HOLY GHOST;[5] while there will readily occur to all of us the symbolic manifestation of the Holy SPIRIT, as in the dove at our LORD'S Baptism[6] and in the earthquake and the fire of Pentecost.[7]

But I do not wish to dwell upon these manifestations now. I wish to approach the subject more intimately, and on the side of our present-day life, and to inquire if there are any regions of our experience where GOD so appeals to us, so that we can say not with a dry conformity to a barren orthodoxy, but in a firm spirit of conviction, 'There is a HOLY GHOST.'

[1] St Luke i. 41, 67. [2] St Luke ii. 25.
[3] St Luke ii. 26. [4] St Matt. xxviii. 19.
[5] St Matt. xii. 31. [6] St Mark i. 10.
[7] Acts ii. 2, 3.

## II

There is a passage in the Book of Wisdom which conveys to us a great truth; 'The Spirit of the LORD filleth the world: and that which containeth all things hath knowledge of the Voice.'[1] (1) When the old Greek looked out upon the universe with all its marvellous laws and adaptations he called it cosmos or 'order,' because its wonderful mechanism fulfilling its allotted task seemed to display a superhuman intelligence and adaptation. To-day we are nothing if we are not scientific; with microscope and telescope and analytical method we pry into the secrets of the material world around us. And moreover this is an age which prides itself on a love of beauty for its own sake. It may be that many of us have gone long distances these holidays and spent much money to see a mountain, or a lake, or an extended landscape, or lovely valley. If we listened more to the voice of the inspired Psalmist or to those writers who call upon all nature to praise and magnify GOD, we should realise that there is something behind all this magnificence of sky and tree and flower, something behind the splendid mechanism of natural law, something which no painter can depict, the light which never was on land or sea, that in beauty, whether of form or function, we are face to face with a mystery which we

[1] Wisdom i. 7.

cannot understand, from which it is but a step onward to recognise the hand of God and the presence of His omnipotence, to trace in all this ordered beauty the presence of the Holy Spirit Himself, sweetly and mightily ordering all things, as once He brooded as the Spirit of order over the formless chaos.

This is not a mere fantastic speculation or a passing sentiment. The presence of beauty in the world as distinct from utility is something which we cannot afford to neglect.[1] A man who is insensible to beauty has lost something. He has lost a power of refinement, he has lost a power of elevation ; it may be he has lost to that extent an appreciation of the presence and work of the Holy Spirit.

What are we doing for beauty? Are ugly sounds and ugly sights and ugly actions coming from man, for ever to mock the loveliness and tenderness of God's activity. It is a sad comment on our boasted civilization, on the large sums spent on so-called education, that there are still to be found men who will scribble their names, shall we say, on the walls of this cathedral, or deface with defilement or ribald jest some majestic work of God, some splendid marvel of nature. Let us cherish refinement, not only as the guardian of morality and as the protector of human worth, but also as the ante-chamber which leads into the

[1] See Dean Church, *Cathedral and University Sermons*, p. 115.

presence of the Spirit of GOD, Who attracts, elevates, and purifies by His own loveliness, and Who covers the works of His own hand with a robe of glory, and administers the universe under the radiance of heavenly beauty. Here in this world around us we may come in contact with the HOLY SPIRIT and His ordered working.

(2) And yet more intimately than this, we are accustomed to look for the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures which the Church puts into our hands. Here is a book, which, in contradistinction to any other book, we call inspired, that is, breathed into by the HOLY SPIRIT. We believe that in that book there is a real presence of the HOLY GHOST. We believe that in every page it is filled with the Divine Presence and power Even those passages which seem to us to be least spiritual, and to some minds even trivial, open up their message to the devout soul, and he finds that the wording which at first repelled him is but the Divine cypher or code whereby GOD speaks to the soul which holds the secret of the interpretation. So St Paul found in a humanitarian treatment of the ox in the Book of Deuteronomy, a precept directing a proper care for the Christian ministry.[1] And more than once in the history of the Passion, passages of the Psalms or Prophets at length are found giving up for the first time their full meaning.

[1] 1 Tim. v. 18.

The Bible is a devotional book, and no one with a commentary or critical apparatus can bind down its words to any one meaning. They will escape into a fuller and more appropriate interpretation ; and hence it is that we can read the Holy Scriptures again and again without weariness or sense of monotony. They are like the sea, like the mountains : always the same and yet always different. They weep when we weep ; they rejoice when we rejoice. Even the most familiar texts seem to catch fresh lights in fresh conditions, and shine with a new glory. It is not a little remarkable to study the power which has been displayed even by isolated texts apart from their context as influencing character or even determining a career; two of the most notable examples being those of St Augustine, who was turned from his evil ways by a text in the Epistle to the Romans, and St Francis by the Gospel which he chanced to hear read in a church, and which he took literally as ordering him to embrace absolute poverty. Do not let us be impatient with isolated texts placed in incongruous places and in strange surroundings : as in a railway carriage for instance. They may be the arrow shot at a venture which may pierce the harness of one who seems steeled against all other influences.

Most earnestly do I plead for the Bible as a book of devotion. Six portions are read in this church every day, besides the recurring Psalms of morning and evening. There is no weapon

like this wherewith to meet our enemies. It was the book of Deuteronomy[1] wherewith CHRIST faced the tempter in the wilderness, and especially those portions with which, as a Boy, He would have become most familiar and which were in common use in the phylacteries of the Jews. The daily Psalms, or the daily portion which we read, may be like the stone which David put into his sling, before which the giant of evil is powerless, and which will stand him in good stead better than the unproved armour of some controversial Saul. 'Thy word is tried to the uttermost, and Thy servant loveth it.'[2] It is wonderful to see how the word of GOD loses none of its power in the hands of the simple Christian who receives it as the word of GOD pure and simple without pressing to pass it through the sieve of human reason, or confining himself to the few texts which a confident criticism conditionally approves as possibly containing the Word of GOD. Here is a region where English people have long been accustomed to look for the voice of the HOLY SPIRIT. It will be a bad day for England if we allow ourselves to be deprived by a mere display of scholarship, of this simple spiritual code in which GOD speaks from the heart to the hearts of His faithful servants.

(3) But even more intimately than this we are accustomed to hear the voice of the HOLY

[1] St Matt. iv. 4. [2] Ps. cxix. 140.

Spirit within the region of the heart. 'He dwelleth with you, and shall be in you.'[1] We all of us are aware of a mysterious voice within us which sits in judgment on our actions as we do them. It approves if we do right; it condemns if we do wrong. And so it has been called 'conscience,' that is a con-science, or simultaneous knowledge of the law of right and wrong, and of our actions as agreeing or disagreeing with that law; or, if you will, an intensive knowledge, knowledge beyond all other knowledge, which sets itself to regulate our inmost motives and springs of action. Now it would not be correct to say that conscience is certainly and always the voice of the Spirit—conscience may become perverted, may even approve of what is wrong and condemn what is right. But if it be properly regulated and kept under control, the Holy Spirit, we may believe, will use the voice of conscience so that it becomes His voice speaking in us and offering us His guidance and approval. If so, it becomes of great importance that we should guard its integrity.

It becomes, for instance, of the last importance that we should never play any tricks with our conscience. It is a delicate spiritual instrument, and may easily be put out of gear. If, for example, the voice of conscience tells us that a course of action is wrong, do not let us hesitate for a moment to follow its advice, for a second

[1] St John xiv. 17.

warning following on neglect may be fainter, and at last Balaam may be found with his heart on the side of God's enemies, because he has tampered with God's plain commands, and had even asked to do what was wrong.

And in like manner the conscience must be kept well informed. There are people who do wrong without any protest on the part of conscience simply because they do not know the particular action to be contrary to God's law. How many sins, for instance, are committed against the holy law of Matrimony because people have never acquainted themselves with that which God has said through the Holy Scriptures and His Church on the subject! If people once realised that marriage is not a mere contract, but a state entered into by contract which nothing but death can alter, how little disposed they would be to listen to the laxity which is working such havoc in home life, and which has captured our legislation so as to sanction what the law of God forbids. If people only knew the sacramental or mysterious meaning of Holy Matrimony, how impossible it would be for them to treat such a sacred thing with levity, or, what is worse, allow themselves to forget that it has to do with the foundation of the family, and, therefore, is built into the very fabric of society. Again and again we hear of good people saying 'I did not know that this was wrong,' 'I did not think that that was wrong'; and so 'God's people are destroyed for lack of knowledge,' and sin

without a protest on the part of the starved conscience. Surely this is the function of the despised sermon, to teach and inform the mind and the conscience. One seldom enters a church now without seeing an exodus of mostly young and irresponsible people, before the sermon, as if they had nothing to learn and wished to learn nothing. So there arises a generation brought up upon the sex-novel and the morals of the Divorce Court; and conscience uninformed is a dumb dog.

Once more, we never can afford to hand over our conscience to the keeping of another. Here, at all events, is a remnant of personal liberty which can never be taken from us and to which we must cling. We must not commit our conscience to another, however wise he may be or however powerful. We must not at the bidding of anyone do evil that good may come. And as we must not be afraid to confront an enemy, so we must not be afraid, if need be, to alienate a friend, which is even harder. Neither the voice of party nor the exigencies of a policy, nor the folly of fashion, nor the obvious advantage of the moment must ever cause us to hand over the control of conscience. 'Do as others do.' 'Vote with your party.' 'Sink your individuality.' 'Do what you are told to do,'—so says the voice of the people, maintaining that it is the voice of GOD. 'Do what your conscience tells you is right.'—so says the voice within. And that voice, if we cleanse our heart and open our ears to the truth, is the voice of

the Holy Spirit using the voice of conscience and making known to us the mind of God.

(4) But the most characteristic field of operations for the Holy Spirit is, after all, the Church. Immediately after 'I believe in the Holy Ghost,' there comes in the Creed 'I believe in the Holy Catholic Church.' It is not possible at the end of a sermon to do more than hint at the wonderful scope and marvellous fulness of that creation of our Lord Jesus Christ which we call the Church—One, because its knows no rival; Holy, because the Holy Spirit works in it; Catholic, because it is spread throughout the world and knows no limit of time or race; Apostolic, because it is founded on the doctrine of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone.

We are hearing a great deal about the disestablishment of the Church at the present time, and perhaps we shall hear more. I wish to say nothing now about the justice or injustice of such a measure, although I hold strong opinions on the subject. But this I would say, that if the severance between Church and State is brought about, if the State ceases to profess any distinctive religion, then the chief sufferer will be the State and not the Church. Does any one suppose for one moment that if the Church were cast off to-morrow, stripped of her endowments and prestige, she would suffer as the great witness for God in the land, the fount of the Sacraments, the guardian of the

great deposit of the faith? The dignity and power of the Church lies in a region far removed from Acts of Parliament and the din of political barter and exchange. The Church is a society founded by CHRIST Himself to help those who are heirs of salvation in their journey through this troublesome world. Archbishop Temple has told us, 'Men speak as if Christianity came first and the Church after; as if the origin of the Church was in the wills of individual Christians who composed it. But, on the contrary, throughout the teaching of the Apostles we see that it is the Church that comes first, and the members of it afterwards; men were not brought to CHRIST and then determined to live in a community. . . . The Church takes its origin not in the will of man, but in the will of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.' [1]

Dismiss therefore at once the idea that the Church is one among many rival bodies made up of men who have banded themselves together to maintain and propagate an episcopal form of government and certain sacramental and ritual peculiarities. If you look at the Church you will see how marvellously it is adapted to the needs of man, a necessary carrying out of the Atonement, a necessary adjunct to the hope of our calling to be the sons of GOD. Here are dealt with, in the only

[1] Archbp. Temple. *Twelve Sermons*, preached at the Consecration of Truro Cathedral. pp. 17-20.

way they can be efficiently dealt with, the great principles of heredity and environment which for good or ill play so large a part in man's life. No wonder Baptism and Confirmation are neglected if they are dissociated from their bearing on those great principles of human development. Holy Communion, again, ceases to be an exaggerated peculiarity of a wonder-working sacerdotalism when we realise its function in the daily growth and nourishment of the Christian soul. Absolution, Ordination, Holy Matrimony, all minister to some of the fundamental needs of man's life, which indeed he cannot do without. And it is not too much to say that if we had only gone along the graduated way of the Church without faltering or flinching we should have been led on step by step in an easy progress by Him Whose commandments are not grievous, and Who, knowing what was in man, because He was Man, left us His Holy Church.

The doctrine of the Holy Trinity is no abstract dogmatic puzzle, but as we have seen, it meets our life at every point. God in man, God with us; this is the great privilege which has culminated in the Incarnation, and has been extended to us in the Sacraments. To know the Father is to realise our vocation, to know the Son is to realise the strength of our redemption, to know the Holy Ghost is to know the Divine power which works in us to purify, to elevate, and to crown.

For 'as many as received Him, to them gave

He power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on His Name.'[1]

* * * * *

There has passed away from us during the last week a remarkable personality, who for many years and in many lands has devoted himself to the religious and social welfare of his fellow men, more especially of those who had become well nigh submerged by the waves of sin and adversity.

The commanding genius, the resolute determination and unsparing devotion of William Booth have forced their way to the front of public opinion, in spite of obloquy and sometimes opposition. He is gone now before the great bar of the Judge of us all, where human praise or human blame must alike be silent.

[1] St John i. 12.

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